

Testimony of Lauren Scopaz Daunais supporting  
SB487 An Act Establishing the Infant and Toddler Early Care and Family Support  
Initiative

Senator Fonfara, Representative Scanlan, members of the Finance Committee, my name is Lauren Scopaz Daunais. I am a resident of Stamford, CT, a parent, and an employee of Stamford Cradle to Career, a collective impact nonprofit ensuring all children have access to the opportunities they deserve for a quality education and start in life. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB487.

This bill would redirect existing tax revenue from the budget reserve to a new non lapsing Early Care and Family Support account. Funds in this account would then be used to contract with child care providers both centers and family child care homes to increase the supply of high quality infant toddler care. Priority will be given to child care providers in lower income child care deserts.

I cannot express strongly enough the importance of passing this bill. The first three years of a child's life includes the majority of the brain's development, building the foundation for lifelong learning. Quality infant and toddler care plays a critical role in providing these early childhood developmental experiences. As a parent in a family with two working parents, and two kids within two years of each other, it was a challenge finding affordable care for two young children, that had hours to accommodate our jobs and was a safe and loving environment. I was lucky enough to find a nearby family child care program that was within our budget. But I know we were more fortunate than many.

All parents love their children and want the best for them. In order to work to provide for them, and to continue the growth of our economy, quality child care is paramount. Many parents have to resort to shuffling kids around to family and friends, who mean well, but may not have the resources, time, or education to provide a stimulating environment. Parents may have to choose between working and caring for a child. If caring for a child, many struggle to put food on the table and support basic needs due to the high cost of living. This negatively affects our families, children, and the economy.

The much needed funds of SB487 will provide long term results – strengthening the readiness of children for Kindergarten, increasing high school graduation rates, and ensuring a future workforce, all while ensuring our current parents can be a productive part of our workforce. It is truly a win-win-win situation.

Thank you for considering this testimony. I urge you to pass this critically important bill to establish funds for infant and toddler care.

Regards,  
Lauren Scopaz Daunais